(c) whether to safeguard the interest of Indian workers there and those from Malaysia in India, Government has urged the Malaysian Government to speed up signing of a MoU between both the countries; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Malaysian Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Steps are being taken for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Malaysia and India, which will lay down the framework for bilateral cooperation to facilitate employment, protection and welfare of workers. The negotiations have been completed. The two Governments are completing the necessary formalities for singing the MoU at the earliest.

Visit of Foreign Minister of Turkey

250. SHRIMATI SHOBHANABHARTIA:
. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Foreign Minister of Turkey has recently visited India and held discussion on several issues;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether the Foreign Minister of Turkey has offered an alternative to Iranian Gas pipeline; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and further reaction of Government on such offer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) Yes.

(b) The two sides held discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. An Agreement for abolition of visas for holders of diplomatic passport between the two countries was signed;

(c)No.

(d) Does not arise.

PM's visit to China

251. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had paid a visit to China recently and held discussions with his counterpart on several issues;

(b) if so, the details of discussions held and outcome thereof;

(c) whether the border dispute issue was discussed with the Chinese Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited China from 13 to 15 January 2008. PM held official talks with Premier Wen Jiabao and had separate meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Wu Bangguo.

PM and Premier Wen Jiabao signed a joint document on 'A Shared Vision for the 21st Century between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China'. They also witnessed signing often other documents covering cooperation in various fields, namely: for Cooperation between the Planning Commission and National Development and Reform Commission of China; on Cooperation between the two Ministries of Railways; MoU between Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of India and Ministry of Construction, PRC; for Cooperation in Land Resource Management, Land Administration and Rehabilitation; MoU on Joint Medical Mission to commemorate the Indian Medical Mission to China between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Chinese People's Association for Freindship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC); MoU for Cooperation between ICCR and CPAFFC; on Cooperation in the area of Geo-sciences; on Cooperation in traditional medicine; MoU on mutual cooperation between NABARD and Agricultural Development Bank of China; and Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Tobacco Leaves from India to China.

Both sides agreed that India-China relations are of regional and global significance. They recognised their 'significant historical responsibility to ensure comprehensive, balanced and sustainable economic and social development of the two countries and to promote peace and development in Asia and the world as a whole. India-China relations are not targeted at any country, nor will it affect their friendship with other countries.

Both sides agreed to intensify further high-level exchanges between the leaders of the two countries. Both sides agreed that the Foreign Ministers of India and China will exchange visits in 2008. They also agreed to continue deepening the mutual understanding and trust between the armed forces and welcomed the successful conclusion of the first joint military training exercise and agreed to hold a second exercise in India in 2008. It was decided to increase the bilateral trade target from 40 billion US dollars by 2010 to 60 billion US dollars. The two Prime Ministers mandated their Ministers of Commerce to examine the Feasibility Study on the benefits of a Regional Trading Arrangement and make recommendations at an early date. It was also decided to establish a high-level Business Leaders Forum to advise the two Prime Ministers on the future of economic ties. PM conveyed India's appreciation for China's assistance in providing flood season data for some trans-border rivers. Both leaders agreed to expand cooperation in this area through the Expert Level Mechanism. In pursuance of the India-China Science & Technology Partnership agreed during the visit of Chinese President to India in November 2006, both sides have now identified earthquake engineering, disaster management, climate change, biotechnology and nano sciences as areas for further cooperation in the priority area of science and technology.

The Boundary Question was aiso discussed during PM's visit. The two Prime Ministers said," The two sides remain firmly committed to resolving outstanding differences, including on the boundary question, through peaceful negotiations, while ensuring that such differences are not allowed to affect the positive development of bilateral relations. The two sides reiterate their determination to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question and to build a boundary of peace and friendship on the basis of the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the

India-China Boundary Question concluded in April 2005. The Special Representatives shall complete at an early date the task of arriving at an agreed framework settlement on the basis of this Agreement". The dates for the next round of talks between the Special Representatives will be decided through diplomatic channels.

PM's visit has led to a broadening of our functional cooperation in bilateral areas and to the deepening of mutual understanding between our two countries.

Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement

252. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is reported to have made a statement to the effect that India would be isolated if it did not sign the civilian under agreement with U.S.A.;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government has not so far moved forward on the safeguard agreement with International Atomic Energy Agency; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Minister of External Affairs, in his extempore remarks while addressing the Kolkata Chamber of Commerce on February 3,2008 conveyed that India has not been able to enter into trade in nuclear materials and technology with the 45 member Nuclear Suppliers Group as their guidelines prevent members from trade and civil nuclear co-operation with India, has not signed the Non Proliferation Treaty and has a strategic programme, India has thus been virtually isolated from cooperation with such suppliers for decades and has been denied access to advanced and dual use technology for decades.

(c) Negotiations on an India-specific safeguards agreement are ongoing with the IAEA.

(d) Does not arise.

Supply of uranium

253. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIMAZMI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that African coutnries like Niger, Namibia, Uganda, Angola produce sizeable quantities of uranium;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government proposes to take up the matter with those countries for the supply of uranium instead of entering into an agreement with USA for the same;

(d) if so, the details thereof and;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN):(a)Yes,Sir.

(b) As per the draft International Atomic Energy Agency Red Book Report 2007, Niger